

Feeling Wanted. Yasmin Mistry (Director). *Foster Care Film*, 2015, 14 minutes. <http://www.fostercarefilm.com/feelingwanted>

One can connect with this film on a personal level, professional level, and academic level. Charell begins telling her story from age six, when her great-grandmother was too ill to care for her and her younger sister. She woke up one day to find her and her sister home alone. As she speaks, her emotions and the amazement of her own strength as a six-year-old can be felt by the viewer. It sounds as if she physically and emotionally becomes that six-year-old girl again as she tells her story.

Charell emotionally reflects on her loving experiences while living with her great-grandmother during the beginning of the film. The story then quickly moves on to Charell explaining her exact feelings the day a social worker picks up her and her sister and drives them to a foster home. She talks about the abuse and embarrassment she experienced with her foster parents. At school, Charell avoided telling other kids that she had foster parents. She would not admit to other kids that she did not have a permanent home. Charell and her sister bounced around between several foster homes, but the most significant and worst experience was the very first foster home after leaving her great-grandmother's house. Despite the terrible experiences in the first foster home, Charell had one positive memory that gave her strength to continue. During a low point in Charell's life, it was her foster sister who encouraged her by giving her a quarter to buy bubble gum from a machine. Charell stated that her foster sister "knew I needed something to pick me up."

Charell's spirit slightly lights up in the film as she speaks of her father. Her father was incarcerated for murder and her mother had a drug addiction. Her father avoided taking responsibility for his mistakes, and the two of them never retained any formal closure. However, Charell makes it a daily journey to forgive

her father, even though it is a struggle. It was at an awkward moment in her life when she reunited with her mother. At age 14, Charell had already developed a sense of independence that her mother could not fully understand. Moving to boarding school provided the perfect distance for Charell to grow as a young woman and for her mother to bond with her younger daughter. Although Charell appreciated the time she had with her mother, she cannot help but to speak of the love that her great-grandmother provided.

The second half of the film moves on to Charell reflecting about her love for school. Despite moving around from school to school, it was school where she felt loved, protected, and could flourish. School and her great-grandmother provided a foundation for love, strength, and perseverance. The beauty of the story is that despite the challenges and hardships, Charell recognizes strength within herself as a young woman that her peers were lacking.

The film is easy to follow for all ages in classroom or conference settings. It would make a great supplement to lectures or seminars on direct practice or child welfare topics. The scenery is believable as it makes viewers feel as if the settings are from Charell's actual childhood. The film is cohesive as it moves from thought to thought. It is engaging to the audience, and some might find it to be an emotional reminder of their own experiences. The film is only 14 minutes long, which for some viewers might seem too short, as the story is so engaging. Nevertheless, it includes moments of silence using nature scenes to provide viewers with opportunities to think and reflect. This short film would stimulate substantial conversation among all ages from teenagers to graduate students and for social work practitioners. This film would be an ideal addition for social work educators to adopt into their curriculums. This film can be viewed through its Web site, which also offers the trailer and links to an upcoming screenings list, educational-license DVDs, and other resources. It is also available through Kanopy Streaming, a site similar to Netflix, but for educational license films. If your university has a subscription, you can log in with your university ID to watch the film (<https://www.kanopystreaming.com/product/feeling-wanted-story-about-foster-care>). **SW**

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